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ABSTRACT

Southeast Missouri State University's Kent Library is the only federal depository library in Missouri's 10th Congressional District and has a collection of over 150,000 U.S. Government documents. This resource guide identifies and describes the reference tools needed to access information in that collection. It includes short sections on basic document indexes, subject bibliographies, scientific and technical reports, historical searches, guides, statistics, and Congressional information; a title index is also provided. (JD)

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U.S. GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS:

A Guide to Sources of Information

by
Duane E. Henricks

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

The Reference Department
Kent Library
Southeast Missouri State University
1979

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A Guide to Sources of Information

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U.S. GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS;

A GUIDE TO SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Kent Library has a collection of over 150,000 U. S. Government Documents available for use by SEMO's academic community and the general public. The only federal depository library in Missouri's 10th Congressional District, Kent regularly receives government publications within certain selected categories covering a wide range of subjects. With the exception of documents treated as periodicals, indexes, abstracts, or reference volumes, all U. S. government publications received in the library are classified by the Superintendent of Documents classification scheme and are shelved in a closed collection on the third level. In order to locate them you must use the basic document index, the Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications. The Monthly Catalog is shelved in the Document Index section, south of the reference desk, and bound in annual volumes dating back to 1895.

Consider the following steps in using the Monthly Catalog:

(1) Publications are listed by subject, title, or issuing agency. Beginning with the January 1974 Monthly Catalog, there are separate author, title, and subject indexes. The index is found at the end of each bound volume. Decennial Indexes are available for the period 1941-1960, as well as a 15-volume Cumulative Subject Index for the years 1900-1971.

(2) Determine the entry number of the publication you want from the

index. (Before 1947, this number refers to page rather than to entry.)

(Sample entry from Subject Index):
Architecture, sixth biennial
HUD awards for design excellence, 09371

The entry number is 09371.

(3) Refer to the complete citation in the main body of the Monthly Catalog by locating the entry number on the left side of the page (to the left of the title). Entry numbers are in numerical sequence.

09371 Sixth biennial HUD awards for
design excellence. March, 1974.
12p. HH 1.41:6

(4) Record the document number which will be found on the right side of the page, at the end of each citation, e.g. --- (HH 1.41:6). From July 1976 to date, the document numbers are centered above each entry of the Monthly Catalog.

76-813

I 19.13:2004
United States. Geological Survey.
Artificial recharge through a well in fissured carbonate rock, West. St. Paul, Minnesota/by Harold O. Reeder. . . (et al.)--Washington: U. S. Dept. of the Interior, Geological Survey: for sale by the Supt. of Docs., Govt. Print. Off., 1976. ...

(5) Ask at the reference desk to see if the desired documents are in the depository collection. Kent Library receives approximately one third of the items indexed in the Monthly Catalog. Take the document numbers to the circulation desk and the documents will be brought to you by the student assistants.

1976 Revised Monthly Catalog. Beginning with the July, 1976 issue, the Monthly Catalog utilizes Anglo-American cataloging rules and Library of Congress main entries. Subjects are derived from Library of Congress Subject Headings 8th edition and its supplements. Four indexes are utilized in the revised Monthly Catalog: author, title, subject, and series/report number. Additional changes include a larger format with two columns of entries on each page, and Superintendent of Documents classification numbers centered above each entry.

A few government documents are cataloged for the reference collection in Kent Library. Their call numbers may be ascertained by checking the library's card catalog for the name of the issuing agency, the title of the document, or the subject.

The government documents located in the periodical department do not receive a document classification number and are shelved like regular periodicals or abstracts, alphabetically by title.

The Index to U. S. Government Periodicals indexes approximately 160 periodicals produced by more than 100 agencies of the U. S. government. Those titles shelved in the periodicals department are entered on the "List of Periodicals" visual list; the other titles are shelved in the government documents collection. The Index to U. S. Government Periodicals is shelved on the periodical index tables.

Also useful for locating government publications are the Publications Reference File and the Subject Bibliography series.

Publications Reference File is a microfiche catalog of all publications currently offered for sale by the Superintendent of Documents. The PRF, in effect, a "Documents in print", is arranged by (1) GPO stock numbers; (2) classification numbers; and (3) alphabetically by subjects, titles, agency series, key words and phrases, and personal authors. (Use of the dictionary index simplifies subject

searches for documents on any topic.) The Subject Bibliography series contains more than 270 bibliographies which list government publications on a single subject or field of interest. There is an index to the bibliographies available. (Call number: Index GP3.22/2)

SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL REPORTS

The following publications may prove helpful in locating scientific and technical reports not listed in the Monthly Catalog:

Government Reports Announcements. Published bi-monthly by National Technical Information Service, Government Reports Announcements and Index provides access to government sponsored research and development reports and other government analyses prepared by Federal Agencies. It is shelved in the periodical department. The Government Reports Annual Cumulative Index is located in the Document Index section south of the reference desk.

Nuclear Science Abstracts provides the only comprehensive abstracting and indexing coverage of the international nuclear science literature. It covers scientific and technical reports of the U. S. Atomic Energy Commission and its contractors, other U. S. government agencies, universities, industrial and research organizations as well as journal literature on a worldwide basis. The Nuclear Science Abstracts are shelved on the abstract shelves.

Scientific and Technical Aerospace Reports (STAR) is an abstract journal produced by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration covering all aspects of earth resources, energy development, conservation, oceanography, environmental protection, urban transportation, and other topics of high national priority are included. STAR is shelved in the Document Index section.

HISTORICAL SEARCHES

To locate historical U. S. documents, in addition to the early issues of the Monthly Catalog, use the following indexes shelved in the Document Index section and the reference area.

Poore, Benjamin Perley. A Descriptive Catalogue of the Government Publications of the United States, September 5, 1774-March 4, 1881. Washington, Government printing office, 1885. Chronologically arranged, the standard catalog and index to the publications of the government during its first century. Most of the entries are for Congressional publications. (Call number: Index/2268 - Congressional Series)

U.S. Superintendent of Documents. Checklist of U.S. Public Documents 1789-1909. Washington, Government Printing Office, 1911. The most useful retrospective bibliography for departmental publications. Documents are arranged by department with a brief explanatory note about each departmental publishing policy. There are also sections on American State Papers, and Congressional Documents from the 15th to 60th Congress. (Call number: Index/GP 3.2:C412.

Ames, John G. Comprehensive Index to the Publications of the U.S. Government, 1881-1893. Washington, Government Printing Office, 1905. (2 volumes). Lists primarily Congressional publications for the 12 years covered. Arrangement is alphabetical by subject with a personal name index. (Call number: Index/GP 3.6:1881-93).

Hasse, Adelaide. Reports of Explorations Printed in the Documents of the U.S. Government. Brooklyn, N. Y., Central Book Co. Reprint of 1899

Government Printing Office edition. Lists reports of early explorations found in departmental and congressional publications; subject arrangement of areas covered, place names, and explorers--with annotations. (Call number: R/016.91/U3r).

See also: CIS Serial Set Index, p. 8.

GUIDES:

The following guides, available at the reference desk, will prove valuable to researchers planning to use government documents extensively:

Schmeckebier, Lawrence F. and Eastin, Roy B. Government Publications and Their Use. 2d rev. ed. Washington, Brookings Institution, 1969. A useful guide to government publications with descriptions, including classification and distribution. Answers many questions as to what was published when, by whom, and in what form. (Call number: R/025.173/Sch44g2/1969).

Boyd, Anne M. and Rips, Rae E. United States Government Publications. New York, H. W. Wilson Co., 1949. Helpful aid for finding and using government publications. Lists and describes the important and typical publications of the various government agencies. (Call number: R/015.73/B693u3).

Jackson, Ellen. Subject Guide to Major United States Government Publications. Chicago, American Library Association, 1968. Quick reference tool and guidebook listing under subject headings the government document titles of permanent importance from the earliest period to the present. Document numbers are included as well as annotations and explanatory notes. (Call number: R/015.73/J133s).

Morehead, Joe. Introduction to United States Public Documents. Littleton, Colorado, Libraries Unlimited, 1975. (Call number: 015.73/M813i).

Palic, Vladimir M. Government Publications, A Guide to Bibliographic Tools. Washington, Library of Congress, 1975. (Call number: R/Ref. Desk/ 015.73/P176g4).

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

American Statistics Index. (ASI) is a master guide and index to the statistical publications of the U. S. Government. This comprehensive guide is kept up to date with monthly supplements. (Call number: R/016.3173/Am35).

Statistical Abstract of the United States is a useful digest of data collected by all the statistical agencies of the U.S. Government. (Call number: R/317/Un3).

Historical Statistics of the United States (Colonial Times to 1970). Includes statistics on the social, political and economic history of the U.S.A. from 1789 to 1970. (Call number: R/317.3/Un3).

Other statistical publications available in the reference department are: Agricultural Statistics (R/630/Un3); Business Statistics (R/650.83/Un3); and Digest of Educational Statistics (R/370.973/Un3d).

CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION

Congressional Record is a daily record of the proceedings and debates of Congress, from the 43d. Congress (1873) to date. Contains presidential messages, congressional speeches and debates in full, and a record of voting; preceded by Annals of Congress (1789-1824), Register of Debates (1824-1837), and Congressional Globe (1833-1873). (Shelved outside the documents enclosure, third level).

Congressional Index, a Commerce Clearing House publication, aids in tracing current legislation, listing bills introduced, committee referrals, committee action, votes on the floor, and enactment into law. (Call number: R/328.73/c736c).

CIS Index. Congressional Information Service monthly publication which indexes and abstracts most documents issued by Congress. Particularly useful for summaries of committee hearings and testimony of individual witnesses. (Call number: R/DOC INDX TABLE/348.31/C76). The CIS Annual contains the cumulative abstracts and index to the entire congressional output for the year, including legislative histories.

CIS US Serial Set Index. 1789-1969. A major index, in twelve parts, of the Congressional Serial Set, a collection of both legislative records and records of Executive branch departments and agencies. The Serial Set is shelved in the documents area on the third level. (Index is shelved on Doc. Index table.)

DOCUMENT CIRCULATION POLICY

Most government documents may be checked out for a two-week period at the circulation desk.

REFERENCE SERVICES

Assistance in using government document indexes and guides is available at the reference desk in Kent Library:

Monday - Thursday	8:00 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Friday	8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Saturday	9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Sunday	1:30 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.

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